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21 February 1957

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Gordon M. Stewart

SUBJECT : Age Limitation for New Employees

Gordon:

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To follow up on our conversation at lunch on Tuesday, there have been brought to my attention recently the circumstances of several employees who are getting along in years, whose usefulness to the Agency will decrease rather than increase as time goes by, and who either are not eligible for retirement benefits or do not wish to retire because they have so little Government service that their annuities would be relatively small when compared with their present salaries. In many instances there is serious question, even now, as to whether the Government is getting its money's worth.

These are difficult problems to face now and ones which I believe almost never occur to the average supervisor when he requests that an individual in his 40's, 50's, or even 60's, be hired. At a time when we are requesting legislation to make retirement economically feasible earlier than would be the case for Government employees generally, it seems inconsistent to me that we should permit the hiring of new employees who will, in a few years, present exactly the same problems, and that probably we should have an Agency policy which would prevent this from happening.

I am aware of the many valuable older employees we have and would want to do everything possible to keep them. I am not concerned about this group, nor do I advocate that lateral entry be tabooed; in many components this is highly desirable and probably essential. What I do advocate is that someone on a very responsible level be required to give careful consideration to this matter when it is proposed to enter an individual on duty who will not be eligible for full retirement benefits at, say, age 62. Unless a person has special qualifications, his skills are in short supply, or some other very good reason is presented, there is a serious question as to whether we should bring on duty personnel who are more than 32 years of age and who are looking toward Government service as a career.

I would appreciate it if you would give some thought to this matter with a view toward possible discussion with the Career Council.

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L. K. White

DD/S:LKW:1aq

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